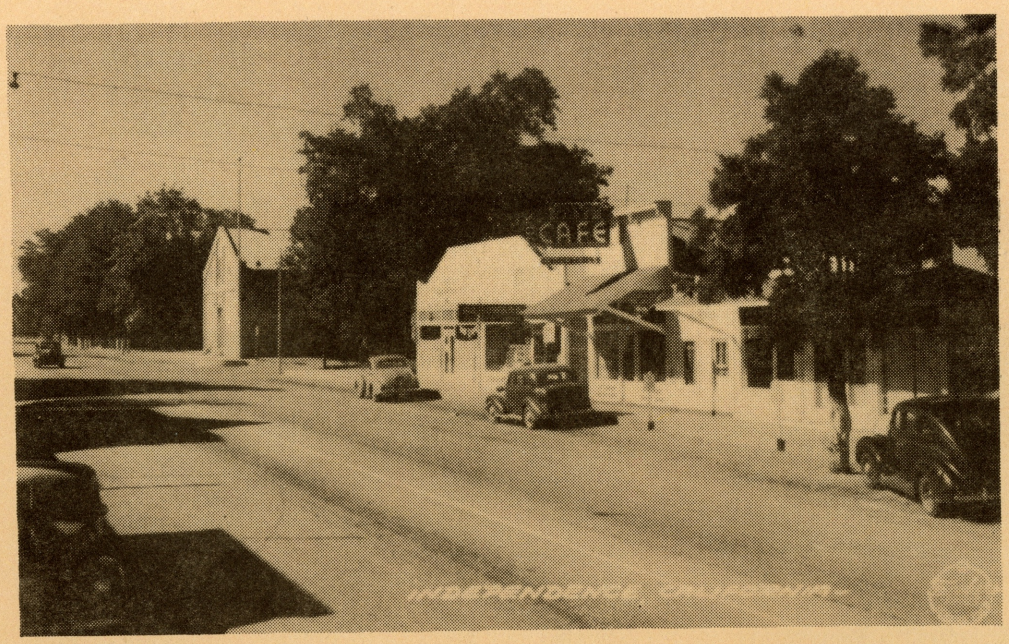
DONATION
50¢

SIERRA TRAVELER

July 4, 1988 Independence, CA Vol.2

Northbound Freight at Tinnemaha Trestle by Doris Raub
Inyo's - Slim Princess Narrow Gauge Co.

WELCOME



Independence

WEST SIDE OF EDWARDS ST.

ABERDEEN RESORT AND CAFE
938-2663
FORT INDEPENDENCE
CAMPGROUND
BOB NEWMAN - OAK CREEK
Building Repair &
Carpentry 878-2943
RAYS DEN MOTEL
405 N. Edwards
878-2122
WINNEDUMAH HOTEL
211 N. Edwards - Box 24
878-2040
THE GRAND MOTEL
154 N. Edwards
878-2011
INDEPENDENCE GARDEN CLUB
BOBBIE'S HAIR SHOP
129 S. Edwards
878-2316
4 OF A KIND VIDEO
135 S. Edwards
878-2061
MAIRS' MARKET
149 S. Edwards
878-2169
MATHER AUTO CENTER
305 S. Edwards
878-2110
COTTAGE MOTEL

EAST SIDE OF EDWARDS ST.

PLANTS PLUS
325 Dusty Lane
878-2116
"SIERRA GOLD" PRINTING
546 N. Edwards
878-2508
JOHN HESTON & BENETT
KESSLER - ESNS
536 N. Edwards
878-2381
PINES CAFE
104 S. Edwards
878-9492
AUSTIN'S GENERAL STORE &
CAFE
130 S. Edwards
878-2242
BARNES PHOTOGRAPHY
222 S. Edwards
878-2004
ANDREW KIRK
General Contracting
LAMASON CHEVRON SERVICE
Edwards & Payne
878-2223
NANCY'S KITCHEN
300 S. Edwards
878-2091
MATHER SUNLAND STATION
350 S. Edwards
878-2172
CIRCLE V MOTEL
440 S. Edwards
878-2313
DUNCAN'S SHELL
634 S. Edwards
878-2112

ANIMALS - PETS

Inyo Animal Shelter . . 873-5891
or 873-8481

CONDITIONS

Road . Caltrans 873-6366
Weather 873-3213

EMERGENCY

Inyo Sheriff . .Collect 878-2411
California Highway Patrol
873-3531
Fire and Police 911
Northern Inyo Hospital 873-5811
Southern Inyo Hospital 876-5501

INFORMATION

Bishop Chamber of Commerce
873-8405
Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce
876-4444

LIBRARY

Inyo County Free Libraries
Big Pine 938-2420
Bishop 873-8091
Independence 878-2411
Lone Pine 876-5031

INDEPENDENCE

American Legion Auxiliary: Second Wed., 7:30 p.m. at Legion Hall (except July & August); 2nd and 4th Tuesdays, 7 p.m.

American Legion Post 265: Second Wed., 7:30 p.m. at Legion Hall (except June, July & August)

Eastern California Historical Society

Independence Civic Club: First Mon., 6:30 p.m. in Sierra Baptist Church's Fellowship Hall; in recess July, August and September

Independence Lions Club: Second and fourth Tue., noon at Pines Cafe.

INDEPENDENCE

Pioneer Memorial United Methodist: Sun., 10 a.m., 878-2236

United Methodist Women: Third Tue. of each month, 7 p.m.

Sierra Baptist Church: Sun. Bible School, 9:45 a.m., worship, 11 a.m. 878-2594.

St. Vivian's: Sun. Mass 9:30 a.m.

DUMP STATION

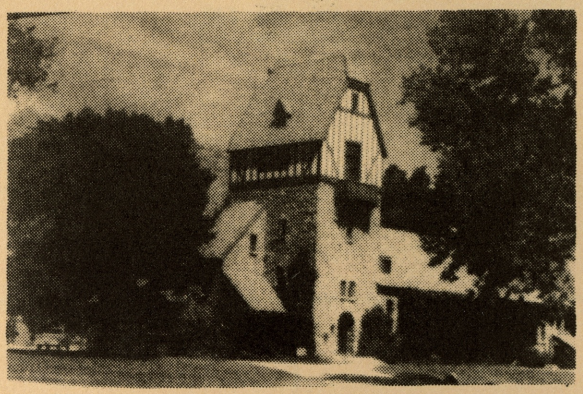
Fort Independence Campground
2 miles No. Independence on Hwy 395

ROBINSON RANCH HOUSE

Lumber from abandoned Camp Independence.

Pioneer Methodist Church of Independence

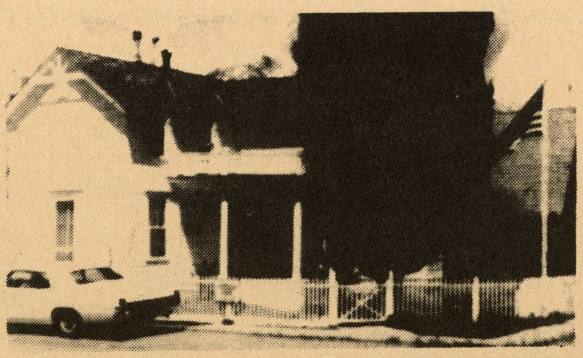
The original church was completed in June of 1886, and the present church was built in 1912.



Mt. Whitney State Fish Hatchery

Construction of the Hatchery was begun in 1916 on land purchased for $1500, by the citizens of Independence and donated to the State. The first trout were produced here in 1918.

The grounds have picnic tables which enable the visitor to enjoy a picnic lunch in this pleasant surrounding.



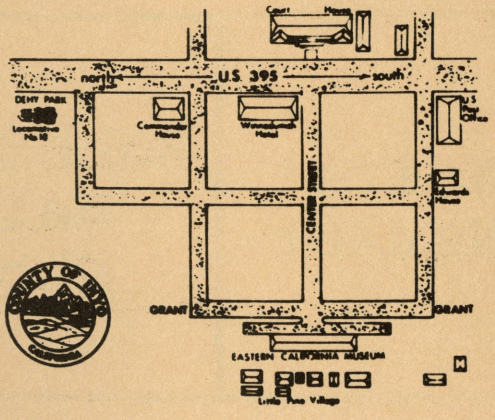
Welcome!

THE COMMANDER'S HOUSE

On March 19, 1862 fifty soldiers under the leadership of Lt. Col. George S. Evans arrived in Owens Valley. They used as a "fort" a stone house built by Charles Putnam. The site of this house is marked across from the new courthouse annex in Independence. The Indians and soldiers engaged in a battle, but the Indians were so well protected in natural fortifications that the soldiers were unable to make contact with them and withdrew to Camp Latham near Los Angeles. In June of 1862 Lt. Col. Evans and 200 men returned to Owens Valley with equipment, wagons, ammunition and rations to last for 60 days. Because the Indians had destroyed the Putnam cabin, Evans chose a permanent site near Oak Creek on July 4, 1862 and named it Camp Independence. Also known as Fort Independence, this outpost was maintained from 1862 to 1877, except for a few months during 1863 and 1865. There were accommodations for 100 men.

The first soldiers at the camp dug out shelters in the banks of a nearby dry arroyo. Several of those "caves" still remain. The Owens Valley earthquake of March 26, 1872 severely damaged the original buildings, the walls of which had been constructed of adobe. Congress appropriated $30,000 to rebuild Camp Independence. This time frame buildings were constructed.

Major Egbert, his wife and boys moved into their new quarters, listed as Captain's Quarters, and now called the Commander's House. The Commander's House was later occupied by Captain and Mrs. Alexander B. MacGowan and their boys. The M in the area above the upstairs windows on the front of the house was for MacGowan. The camp was ordered abandoned and was closed on July 10, 1877. After a period of several years, the Commander's House was purchased from the U.S. Govern- ment by V.G. Thompson for the sum of $345 and moved to the corner of Edwards and Main Streets where it now stands.



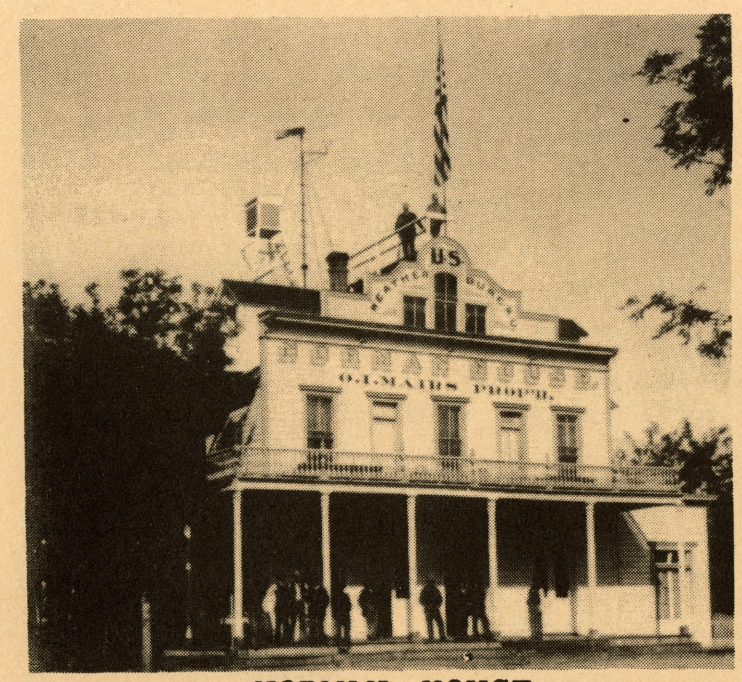
Original Map Now Hangs in

Mairs' Market	Bobbie's Hair Shop	Sunshine Mining Company	Winneduma Hotel

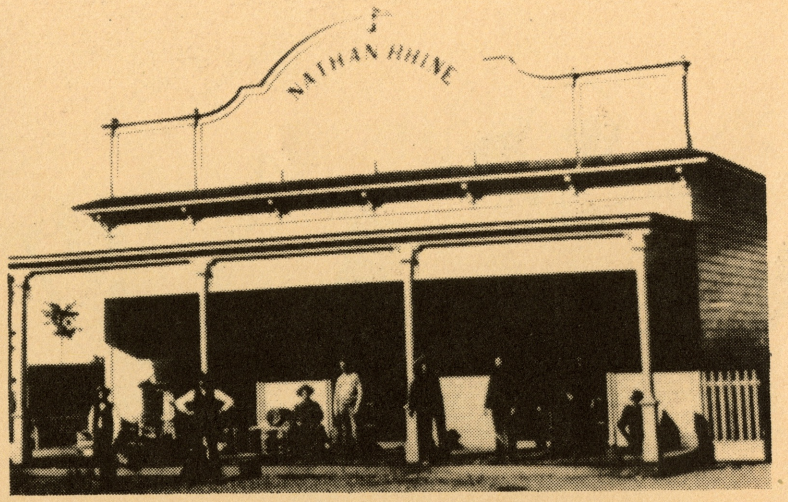
AUSTIN'S GENERAL STORE

The Grand Motel	Duncan's Shell	Eastern Sierra News Service	Pines Cafe

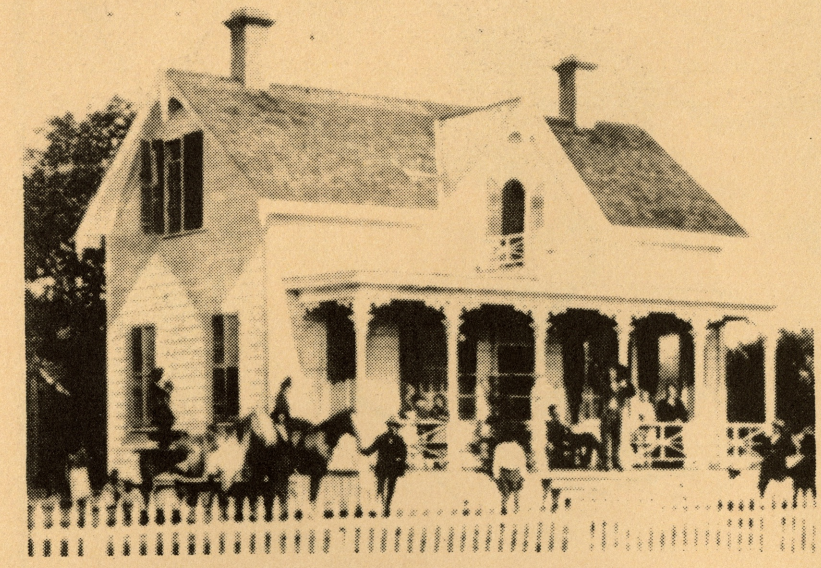
IN DAYS GONE BY



NORMAN HOUSE



RHINE BUILDING -
NOW PINES CAFE (1886)



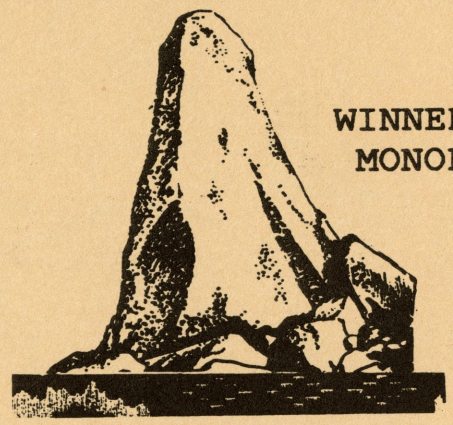
JOHN SHEPHARD HOME

South of Independence, 1873-1904

The booms and busts of the mining camps brought good times and hard times to Owens Valley farmers. During the 1860s and '70s Cerro Gordo and the roaring camps of Aurora, Bodie, Candelaria, and Darwin paid good prices for all the food, grain, and livestock Valley farmers could deliver. But hard times came in the '80s and '90s when the rich veins dwindled and silver prices skidded from $1.34 to 62 cents. The pioneers loved their land and their valley however, and most stuck it out through good years and bad.

John Shephard started with 160 acres on Shepherd Creek and eventually acquired 2,000. He raised apples, grain, hay, cattle, horses, and mules. The Shepherd home was one of the showplaces of Inyo

Eastern California Museum photo, gift of Eva Shepherd Gunn.



WINNEDUMAH
MONOLITH

A most striking landmark visible from Owens Valley is called Winnedumah of the Paiute Mountain, located along the skyline in the center of the mountain range east of Independence. A solid block of weather worn granite, the irregular trapezoidal base is 52 feet in length, the south side is 45 feet high, the north side is 12 feet high; the sides are irregularly rounded and smooth, the summit is inaccessible, about 80 feet high.

Legend of Winnedumah

"When digger Indians crossed the Sierra to raid the Paiute's hunting grounds, they fought a terrible battle last- ing many days. Defeated, the Paiutes fled - some hiding in caves at Blackrock, others escaping into the Inyos. When exhausted Winnedumah reached the crest, he stopped to wait for his brother. While he prayed to the Great Spirit on behalf of his beaten people, the earth shook and thundered, frightening the Diggers so that they retreated from the Valley; the faithful Winnedumah was turned into a pillar of stone that still watches over his people."

Historic Engine No. 18 is retired to this position of honor in Dehy Park in Inyo's County seat, Independence. During its working years, it carried ore and supplies from the mines between Keeler and Laws over the famous "Slim Princess" narrow gauge rails.

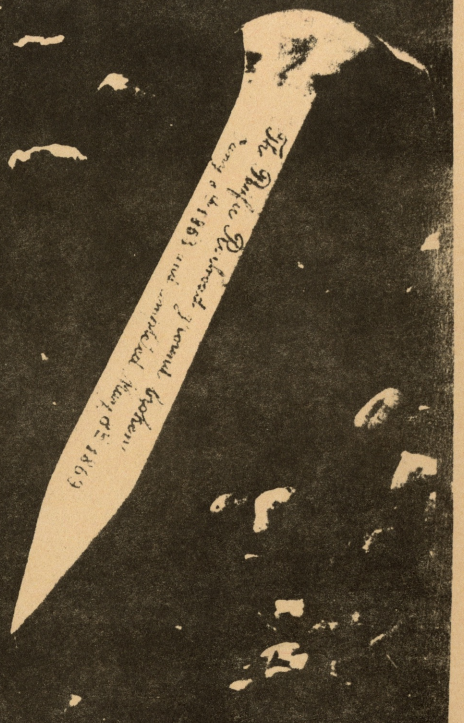
On May 10, 1869, at Promontory, Utah, the Golden Spike was ceremoniously driven to open the first modern transportation link between East and West. This completed the transcontinental railroad and changed the history of the United States. Millions of eager Americans and immigrants poured into the West—to farm, homestead, mine and make things. The two shining steel rails linked this wilderness with the marketplaces of America.

Farsighted government investments called "Land Grants" made it possible. But the myth persists they were gifts. In fact, they were sound, hard-driven business investments in the future of a nation. And, for nearly 100 years, the U.S. Government and taxpayers earned a high rate of return on those investments in the form of greatly reduced rail rates. Railroads were required to transport government personnel and freight at 50 percent of established rates; and mail at 80 percent. This included the massive numbers of troops and unprecedented freight volume carried during World War II.

By the time the reduced rate provisions of the land grant acts finally were repealed in 1946, the debt had been repaid by a sum nearly 10 times the original value of the land according to government estimates. Further more, less than 8 percent of today's rail mileage stems from those long-ago land grants.

The U.S. Government got everything it wanted from railroad land grants—and more. The policy opened the West, increased the value of adjacent public lands, and earned the taxpayers a return on their investment of some 1000 percent.

For more facts, write: Paid In Full, Dept 57, Association of American Railroads, 1920 L Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036



"May God continue the unity of our Country as this Railroad unites the two great Oceans of the world."

Golden Spike courtesy of the Stanford University Museum of Art

In Memory of the "Slim Princess"

Doubtless there are none of us who know from whence came the name "Slim Princess". Some thought from the slim rails that extended over the 300 miles, but to most the name was accepted for the sentiment it bore.

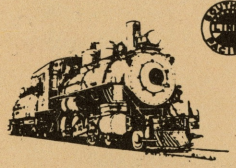
Since that day in April 1960, when the last train arrived at Laws, there were those who dreamed of preserving the site, against adverse conditions. It now appears the program of preservation and restoration is at hand.

There are those who have passed the station, occupied with their thoughts, and scarcely giving it a glance. They were in the minority. Among the others were: the retired engineer who stood by Old No. 9 remembering the day his hand was on the throttle . . . the elderly couple who stopped to recall the day a youthful bride-to-be was met at the station . . . a former valley rancher from a piece down the track whose thoughts included days of long ago when the little engine whistled his milk cows off the tracks . . . the ex-sheepman paused to let his mind drift back to when he had loaded sheep at this site for shipment to northern markets . . . the salesman, banker and miner who had stepped down from the coach after a long hot ride, to take their place in a new community . . . the soldier who had waved goodbye as he departed for the war and many, many others who would be pleased if the depot and "Slim Princess" could be retained for future generations to view and enjoy.

nated by S. P. to Inyo County. Deed accepted by Bd. of Supervisors. Recorded in official records Inyo County Vol. 165, page 78.

JAN. 1965—County of Inyo, City of Bishop, negotiated an Agreement with Bishop Museum and Historical Society to take over Laws site as Headquarters with permission to operate a Museum under certain conditions mutually agreed upon.

APRIL 1, 1966—LAWS RAILROAD MUSEUM opened to the public 83 years from the day the first scheduled train arrived at Laws from the north, complete with U. S. Mail, Wells Fargo Express and baggage cars, and offering both passenger and freight service.



WAYS OF HELPING IN THE RESTORATION PROGRAM

BY SPECIAL DONATIONS

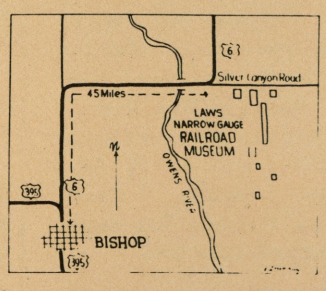
BY MEMBERSHIPS

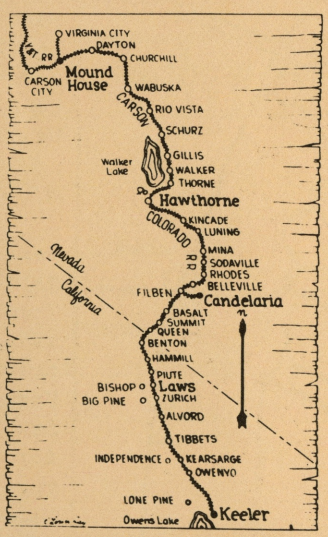
Schedule of Annual Dues

Individual (Adult)	$ 2.00
Individual Junior	1.00
Sustaining	5.00
Organizational	10.00
Commercial or Professional	25.00
Life Membership	100.00
Life Membership	$100.00-500.00
Benefactor	Over 500.00

OUR AIM: "To discover, procure, preserve whatever may relate to the natural, civic, literary and ecclesiastical history of our area."

BISHOP MUSEUM & HISTORICAL SOCIETY
324 Grove St., Bishop, California 93514





GIFT DEED

In appreciation of the interest of Inyo County and the City of Bishop in preserving the memory of the Far West's last common carrier narrow gauge railroad, the Keeler Branch, Southern Pacific Company is pleased to donate steam locomotive No. 9 together with other rolling stock and the Laws Station Building and surrounding installations for safekeeping in behalf of generations to come.

Chronology In Brief . . .

INCORPORATED MAY 10 1880

FEB 1882—Railroad completed from Mound House to Candelaria Nev

JAN 1883—Completed to Benton Calif

MAR 1883—Completed to Laws—first train run Apr 1

JULY 1883—Completed to Hawley Keeler Train service initiated in August

FEB 1892—Carson & Colorado Railway Co incorporated to consolidate three divisions and to refinance previous corp

MAR 1900—C & C sold to S P for $2,750,000 R J Laws for whom station was named retained as Supt

JULY 1905—Tracks from Mound House to Tonopah Jct standard gauged 145 mi Hawthorne, Nev founded by C & C in 1881 by passed Shops moved to Mina

AUG 1905—Standard gauge to Tonopah completed N G abandoned

SEPT 1905—Mountain Time for N G adopted

FEB 1908—Construction started on S P "Jawbone Branch" standard gauge road Mojave to Owenyo, jct point with N G Keeler to Laws Branch

OCT 1910—"Jawbone Branch" completed—used principally to haul equipment and supplies for building Owens Valley Aqueduct City of Los Angeles—first direct railroad service south out of Owens Valley

JAN 1912—Nev & Calif Ry Corp C & C dissolved and N G assumed Southern Pacific designation

JUNE 1913—Overnight Pullman sleeper service inaugurated between Owenyo and L A over "Jawbone Branch" Business conducted from Owenyo office

1932—Passenger service through Laws abandoned

1943—Mina to Laws freight service abandoned and track removed

JAN. 1959—S P announces application for ICC permission to discontinue N G Keeler to Laws branch (the last narrow gauge common carrier west of the Rocky Mts. Permission later granted

REASON declining and unpredictable use of line — expensive and time consuming transfer of shipments between narrow gauge small sized cars and standard gauge cars — Action unavoidable though regrettable from a sentimental point of view S P expressed a great affection for the unique branch line which dates from 1883 and appreciates the warm regard for the line by old-time residents and a host of railroad hobbyists However the little railroad with its 36 inch gauge and tiny cars is an anachronism which can no longer be justified on an efficient operation

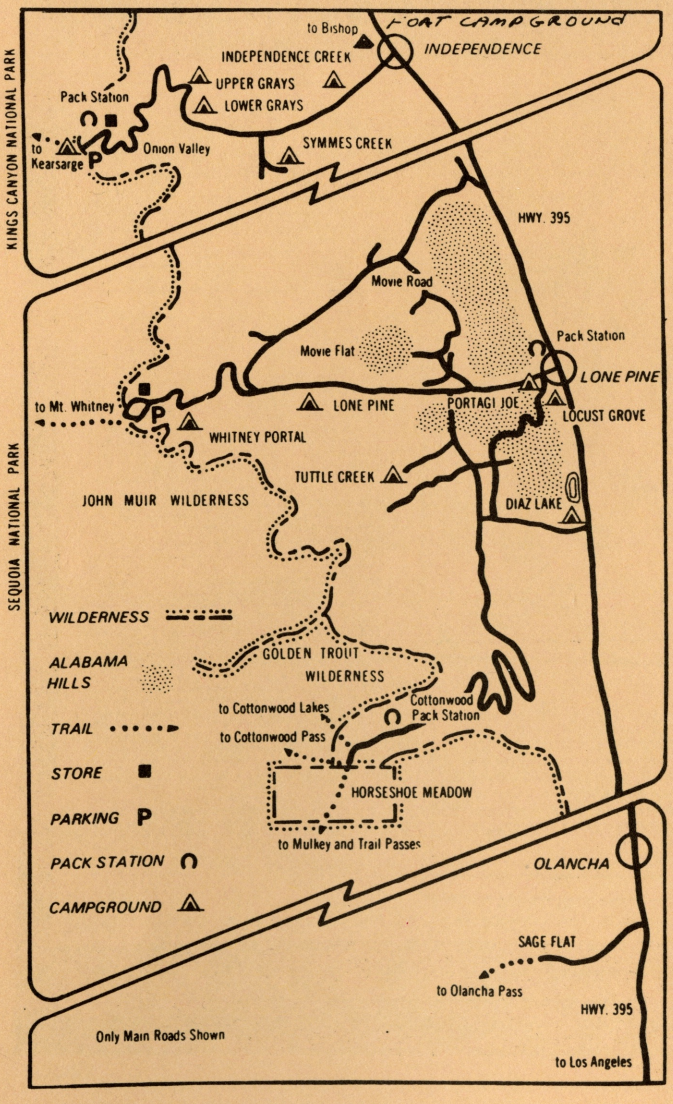
FEB 1960—Laws Agency discontinued and depot closed

APR 30 1960—Final dis. of operation of narrow gauge between Laws and Keeler Locomotive No 9 a ten wheel Baldwin built in 1909 together with a string of ore Laws Station Building and surrounding railroad installations formally transferred by the S P jointly to the City of Bishop and County of Inyo in form of a Gift Deed Thus ended the story of The Slim Princess as a living moving part of railroad history It is now legend

JULY 6 1964—Actual transfer of land appr 11 acres do

HIGH SIERRA PACK TRIPS

Mt. Whitney, 14,496 Feet
Highest point in California



ONION VALLEY PACK TRAINS
Mark Berry, P.O.Box 1791, Bishop, CA 93514
Eastern Entrance to Sequoia and Kings Canyon National Parks to excellent lake and stream fishing and spectacular high country scenery over five major passes. Kearsarge, Shepherd, Sawmill, Baxter and Taboose. Choice areas: Kern, East, Baxter, Sawmill Lakes, Vidette Meadows and Center Basin and many more. Headquarters at Onion Valley. Phone 619-873-8877.

MT. WHITNEY PACK TRAINS
P.O.BOX 1514, Bishop, CA
Serving Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park and the Golden Trout Wilderness. Specializing in all inclusive and traveling type pack trips. Unsurpassed Golden Trout fishing available. Write for itineraries of trips that include crossing Taboose, Sawmill, Baxter and Shepherd Passes for entry into Sequoia Kings Canyon National Park. Natural History and Packing Vet Med UC Extension courses available in late June and early July in the Golden Trout Wilderness. Write for maps, folder and information.

COTTONWOOD PACK STATION
Write:
Dennis & Kathy Winchester
Star Route Box 81-A
Independence, CA 93526
619-878-2015

CAMPGROUNDS

IndependenceCreek
West on Market Street 1/2 mile - 25 spaces

Lower Grays Meadow
West on Market Street
3 miles to camp
17 spaces

Upper Grays Meadows
West on Market Street
4 miles to camp
34 spaces

Onion Valley
West on Market Street
13 miles to camp
Trailers not recommended
35 spaces

Symmes Creek Campground
4 1/2 miles Southeast via Onion Valley Rd - 55 spaces

Oak Creek Campground
No of Independence Turn west on the fish Hatchery Rd.
1 mile beyond hatchery - as the road y's keep to the right - 27 spaces

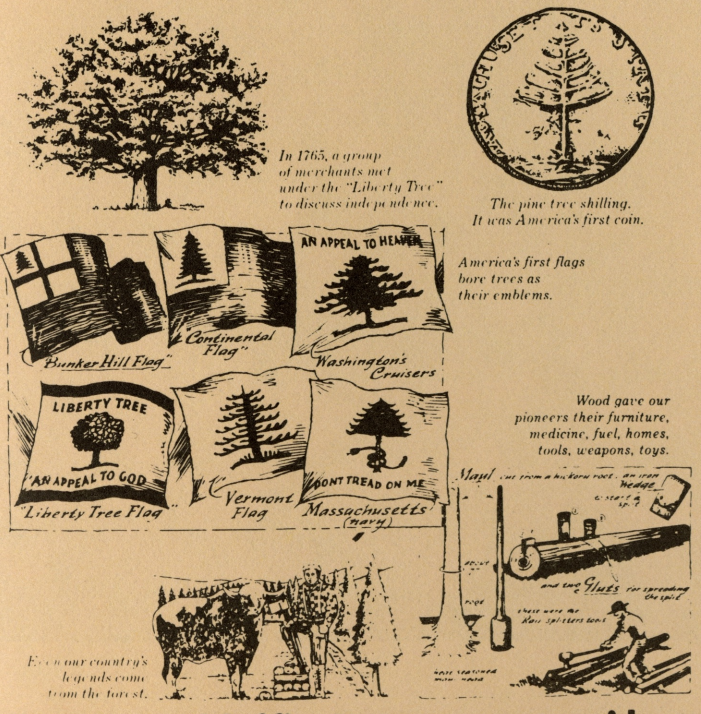
ALL OF THE ABOVE CAMPGROUNDS REQUIRE A CAMPING FEE

PRIVATE CAMPGROUND

Fort Independence Campground
Two miles north of Independence, 51 spaces, piped water, electrical hook-ups, a comfort station, hot showers, disposal station and a complete food store. Inquire at store for camping rates.

INDEPENDENCE HALL, PHILADELPHIA 1776.

"OUR AMERICAN HERITAGE"


In 1765, a group of merchants met under the "Liberty Tree" to discuss independence.
The pine tree shilling. It was America's first coin.
America's first flags bore trees as their emblems.
AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN
"Bunker Hill Flag"
"Continental Flag"
Washington's Cruisers
LIBERTY TREE
"AN APPEAL TO GOD"
"Liberty Tree Flag"
Vermont Flag
DONT TREAD ON ME
Massachusetts (navy)
Wood gave our pioneers their furniture, medicine, fuel, homes, tools, weapons, toys.
Mast
and the Flues
Each of our country's legends come from the forest.

Please be careful of fire. Because a country without its forests is a country without its future.

American "Freedom" has cost a lot in terms of dedication and human life.

On July 4th, Family and Friends gather together to reaffirm and renew the principals of freedom that our forefathers fought so hard to insure.

To the Welcome Traveler and all of us who live in the Owens Valley, enjoy our Independence Celebration.

Painting by Eleanor Taylor

Welcome to the County of Inyo

LAND OF THE UNUSUAL

COMMANDER'S HOUSE

English speaking pioneers began occupying Owens Valley in 1861. Conflicts between cattlemen and Paiute Indians led to war in 1862. To protect cattlemen and prospectors, Lt. Col. George W. Evans commanding the Second Cavalry, California Volunteers established Camp Independence on July 4, 1862. The Camp was located 2-1/2 miles north of Independence, the County seat. The town took its name from the Camp. Except for a period from 1863-1865, the Government maintained the Camp until 1877. By this date the Paiutes and Shoshonis had been completely pacified.

The 1872 earthquake severely damaged the adobe structures of the Camp whereupon the Federal Government appropriated $30,000 for the construction of frame buildings. The Captain's Quarters (now called the Commander's House) was one of the new structures.

Major Egbert and his family first resided in the quarters; later Captain MacGowan and his family occupied the house. The letter "M" in the dormers above the front porch purportedly represents the name, MacGowan.

In 1883 the Government auctioned off the Camp buildings. V. G. Thompson purchased the Captain's Quarters for $345. Later, the Densmore family acquired the house and moved it to its present location around 1889. The house may have been moved in sections.

The Captain's Quarters (Commander's House) is a Victorian style structure having high ceilings and a bay window. Part of its historic value lies in its furnishings, dating from 1820 to 1910, and which reflect our American heritage and the history of Inyo County. Soldiers at Fort Independence made some of the furniture whereas other pieces date later than the Camp and originated in other sections of our County.

The house was a private residence until 1961 after which the Eastern California Museum Association began the restoration of the site. In 1963 the Association opened the house to the public. In 1977 the Association voted to transfer the administration of the site to the Eastern California Museum, a department of the County of Inyo. Visitors may see additional objects from Camp Independence in an exhibit at the County museum located at 155 Grant Street in Independence.